"He only, who in the past has been the friend and protector of white labor, will be the friend and protector of colored labor in the future."

CELEBRATION

OF THE

EMANCIPATION

OF THE

SLAVES

IN THE

BRITISH WEST INDIES,

AT

MILLER'S GARDEN, MILWAUKEE, WIS., AUG. 1, 1882.

ADDRESS BY JOHN W. HINTON,

OF MILWAUKEE.

MILWAUKEE :
Wisconsin Legal News, 430 and 432 Broadway.
1882.

ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen :

To-day is the anniversary of the emancipation of the slaves in the British West India Islands; of one of the most prominent events in English History ; of the passage of an Act of Parliament that gave freedom to thousands of colored people, of which they had been cruelly robbed for many, many years. Any one who thinks of that event, needs no very strong imagination to call up the names of those so active in promoting that simple act of justice to an oppressed race, Granville Sharpe, Wilberforce, Clarkson, Buxton, Brougham, Wesley and others.

Quite recently an important event occurred in this country, the celebration of the seventieth birthday of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. In the opening address, Mr. Houghton, of the great book firm in Boston, said :

"The great epic of our age is the narrative of the wanderings and sorrows of 'Uncle Tom'; and his trials and the victories which he wrought for, his epoch are to be our Iliad and Æneid for centuries to come."

Henry Ward Beecher, in his remarks, said ofMrs. Stowe :

"She saw slavery entrenched in all the power of politics, in all the power of commerce, and with the benediction of a sham religion, at the time in which she entered upon this career."

Mrs. Stowe in response, alluding to the capacity of the negro to succeed, related :

"An old negro friend in our neighborhood has got a new, nice two-story house, an orange grove and a sugar mill. He has got a lot of money besides. Mr. Stowe met him one day, and he said : 'I have got twenty head of cattle, four head of 'hoss,' forty head of hen, and I have got ten children, all *mine, every one mine.*' Well, now, that is a thing that a black man could not say once, and this man was sixty years old before he could say it."

How different it is to-day compared with what it was when Macaulay made his speech on the sugar duties in the House of Commons, describing North Carolina and Virginia as the great slave-breeding States, they driven like cattle to be sold in the more southern States:

"A black boy is picked up here, a black girl there. The dearest ties of nature and marriage are torn asunder as rudely as they were ever torn asunder on the coast of Guinea. A gang of three or four hundred negroes is made up; and these wretches, handcuffed, fettered, guarded by armed men, are driven southward, as you would drive—or rather as you would not drive—a herd of oxen to Smithfield, that they may undergo the deadly labor of the sugar mill, near the mouth of the Mississippi. A very few years of that labor

in that climate suffice to send the stoutest African to his grave. But he can well be spared. While he is fast sinking into premature old age, negro boys in Virginia are growing up as fast into vigorous manhood, to supply the void which cruelty is making in Louisiana. God forbid that I should extenuate the horrors of the slave trade in any form! But I do think this is its worst form. Bad enough it is that a civilized man should sail to an uncivilized quarter of the world where slavery exists, should there buy wretched barbarians, and should carry them away to labor in a distant land. Bad enough! But that a civilized man, a baptised man, a man proud of being a citizen of a free State, a man frequenting a Christian Church, should breed slaves for exportation, and, if the whole horrible truth must be told, should even beget slaves for exportation, should see children, sometimes his own children, gamboling around him from infancy, should watch their growth, should become familiar with their faces, and should then sell them for four or five hundred dollars a head, and send them to lead in a remote country a life which is a lingering death; a life about which the best thing that can be said is that it is sure to be short; this does, I own, excite a horror exceeding even the horror excited by that slave trade which is the curse of the African coast. I am speaking of a trade as regular as the trade in pigs between Dublin and Liverpool, or as the trade in coals between the Tyne and the Thames."

THE OLD SLAVE TRADE.

It may be well, my friends, to recall some of the incidents of that curse of the African coast. In this country we are too apt to be always looking forward, forgetting the past. I will give you a few brief facts:

"The first importation of slaves into the West Indies, from the coast of Guinea, Africa, was by the Spaniards in 1502, Portuguese 1517, English 1562, and French 1564."

"In the year 1517, the Emperor Charles V. of Portugal granted a patent to certain persons for the exclusive supply of 4,000 negroes annually from the Portugese settlement on the coast of Guinea, to the Islands of St. Domingo, Cuba, Jamaica and Porto Rico, this patent having been assigned to some Genoese merchants. The supply of negroes to the Spanish-American plantation became from that time an established and regular branch of commerce. The sanction of this measure of the Emperor was obtained at the solicitation of Bartholomew de la Casas, Bishop of Chiapa.

The origin of the slave trade is thus traced to a Mexican bishop.

Sir John Hawkins was the first Englishman who embarked in the slave trade. He started from England in Oct., 1563, and went to Sierra Leone, where he forcibly seized over 300 negroes, whom he took to St. Domingo, where he sold his whole cargo. Two years later he again sailed (in 1564) from England with a fleet of vessels to steal more negroes. (The little regard men had for religion seems to some extent to have been manifested in the christening of their vessels. One of those slavers referred to was named "Jesus," and another was named "John the Baptist.") In 1672 a company was formed in London, whose business was stealing negroes in Africa. It was called "The Royal African Company;"

and in a short time the entire capital called for was raised, amounting to nearly $600,000. From 1680 to 1700 there were seized and exported from the African coast about 325,000 negroes. From 1700 to 1786 there were 610,000 negroes stolen from Africa and imported into Jamaica alone; and from 1680 to 1786 the number of negroes stolen from Africa and imported into the British Colonies of America, and the West Indies, was 2,130,000. In 1793 there were 100,000 negroes stolen from Africa: by the British 38,000, French 31,000, Dutch, (not German, remember,) 4,000, Danes 2,000, Portuguese 25,000. In 1848 the Governor of Cape Coast Castle estimated that the number of slaves taken from the Bights of Benin and Biafra was at least 140,000 a year. In 1863 Cuba had 860,000 slaves, and the Brazils had 2,995,000 slaves. The number in the United States you all know.

THE HORRORS OF THE SLAVE TRADE,

even at this late day, appear like fiction, although we know of the truth of the disgusting recitals through volumes of sworn testimony. Still they seem too horrible for belief. I will quote you a few incidents:

"A slaver captured off Loando, of 18 tons burden, contained 105 slaves, all children, the oldest but 8 years of age, the youngest but 3. Another of 50 tons carried 306 slaves; still another of 38 tons carried 214 slaves. We read of cases, all well authenticated, so horribly cruel that I cannot repeat them here. I will cite you:— The Arganti left Africa with 500 slaves. The narrator says: "The plan hit upon by the owners of the Arganti to lessen the expenditure in the cost of daily food was, the slaves were murdered as required for daily provender, cut into pieces, cooked as any other meat would be, and served up, with a very limited allowance of rice, for the sustainance of their late companions in misery and suffering. When captured by a man-of-war she had but 320 left alive; the greater portion of the other 180 having been murdered, cooked and eaten."

A Portuguese schooner, chased by the Water Witch, having 320 slaves on board, threw overboard 130 linked together, to lighten the vessel, so as to reach shallow water, when the captain ran her aground and, with his crew, escaped.

One witness describes the appearance of the interior of the cargo of slaves as "like herrings in a barrel;" another said "like boxes of figs;" another "like a swarm of bees," and so on. When being packed in the hold, alive, remember, the sailors would place a plank upon the upper one, then two or three jumped upon it to squeeze it down level with the lower ones. Such was the shocking condition of the poor creatures after the terrible mortality on the passage, that when the living ones were carried ashore they could not walk to English or American slavery, and shovels were used to scoop up the fragments of the dead, among which the living had lain often for weeks.

So fearfully hardening, so deadening to every humane sentiment, to the instincts of morality, to the dictates of our common religion, to the principles of Christianity, did that damnable traffic render those who where engaged in it, and those who profited by it, that it

almost surpasses belief. A member of the British Parliament remonstrated against the bad behavior of the negroes on the coast of Africa. Here is the exact language of his complaint:

"Gentlemen, you can never imagine how perfidiously the negroes treat us; their wickedness is so great that on some of the coasts of Africa they prefer death to slavery. When we have bought them, they stab themselves, or plunge into the sea, which is so much loss to the purchaser. Judge by this action of the perversity of that abominable race."

The complainant was, as the historian says, "a devout member of the established church," and it is but fair to suppose that when the surpliced priest of the church of England read that part of the Litany, praying against "hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy word and commandment," he devoutly responded, "GOOD LORD DELIVER US."

The poet Cowper realized the horrors of slavery and the slave trade, and that the negro would be justified in doubting the existence of a white man's God, or the presence of humanity in the white man's breast. He puts these words into the mouth of a negro, bending in supplication to the Throne of Mercy:

"Is there, as you sometimes tell us,
Is there one who rules on high,
Has he bid you buy and sell us,
Speaking from His throne, the sky?
Ask Him if the knotted scourges,
Fetters, blood-extorting screws,
Are the means which duty urges,
Agents of his will to use?"

A negro, escaping from the slave-catchers trying to recapture him, destroys himself in sight of his pursuers sooner than be caught, he is made to say:

"To you this unpolluted blood I pour,
To you that Spirit which ye gave restore."

HEROIC ACTS OF NEGROES.

Colored people have not been wanting in heroism even to self-immolation in the cause of freedom. Many a slave woman about to become a mother has destroyed herself in the presence of the white father of her unborn child, to prevent its being sold into distant slavery. Let me relate to you an American story:

THE MASSACRE AT BLOUNT'S FORT.

On one of the banks of the Apalachicola river may yet be seen some relics of an abandoned fort. In 1815, after the war of 1812 had ended, it was a place of refuge for escaped slaves from Georgia, and their descendants, numbering more than three hundred in all. But a few of them had ever been in servitude. Many of them were several shades lighter than black. For years they had been there, had their herds of cattle and flocks roaming in the wilderness, living in peace, harming no one. The President of the United States, who had been reared amid southern institutions, was called upon to capture the inhabitants of the fort to be restored to their alleged owners. The U. S. Secretary of War was directed to send a detachment of troops to destroy Blount's Fort, "to seize those who occupied it and to return them to their owners." (So reads the

Executive document.) General Jackson, first in command, directed Lieutenant Colonel Clinch to carry out the order. He appears to have been too humane to do the "job.". After reconnoitering he reported "the fortification was not accessible by land." Commodore Patterson, commanding the American flotilla lying in Mobile Bay, directed Lieutenant Loomis to ascend the Apalachicola River with two gunboats," to seize the people in Blount's fort, deliver them to their owners and destroy the fort." A midshipman demanded the surrender of the fort, stating that its inmates were to be given up to the "slaveholders, then on board the gun boats, who claimed them as fugitive slaves." The demand was indignantly refused, and the midshipman returned to the gun boats.

A consultation was held among the inmates of the fort, and signs of fear being manifested by some of the females and one or two of the males, an old patriarch, who had been years in slavery, whose back was scarred from whippings, and whose shoulder bore the brand of his former master, addressed them, assured them of their safety from harm by the shots of the gunboats, and urged resistance to the end, concluding with the words memorable in the cause of the white man's freedom, "Give me liberty or give me death"—words often repeated by the agonized mothers and fathers that day. The cannonade was kept up for several hours, proving harmless, when shells were thrown and echoed to by the shrieks of the wounded and groans of the dying, which were heard by the gun boats' crews. There was no sign of surrender, when shot were made hot and aimed at the old magizine. Suddenly it appeared to rise, then a dreadful explosion was heard, and two hundred and seventy parents and children were hurled into eternity. Only fifteen escaped alive, and those were taken back to slavery. The dead were left unburied—left for food for the vultures.

Twenty years after the massacre at Blount's fort, an American representative of a free State rose in Congress and proposed a gratuity to the crews of those gun-boats, as a token of the gratitude of the American nation for their "soldierly and gallant conduct" in exploding a powder magazine at long range, where not a shot was fired in defence, and deliberately murdering two hundred and seventy negroes and their children, not one of whom had committed any offence against any law of humanity or of God. The bill passed both houses of Congress, was approved by the President, and five thousand dollars was appropriated as prize money to those blood-stained sailors.

I refer you to the third session of the twenty-fifth Congress for verification of that story. A portion of it is copied from its relation by Joshua R. Giddings.

The conduct of the colored people in the South during the rebellion was often the subject of just praise. As Garfield said : no northern soldier ever applied for help or food at a negro's cabin and was turned away. No traitor to the north was ever found in a black skin; and when night came, by the light of the North Star, the white man was conducted by his black pilot to a place of safety.

The negro race have rarely had justice done them in this

country. A fugitive slave, William Wells Brown, visiting the grave of Wilberforce in England, relates how he saw the monument to Lord Nelson in Trafalgar Square, and that among the life-sized figures in the group was one of a full-blooded African, as black a man as was ever imported from Africa. He had shared in the honors of the victory, and he was represented in his proper place close by the side of Lord Nelson, on one of England's proudest monuments. He contrasted that fact with the monument to the memory of the brave Americans who fell at the storming of Fort Griswold, Connecticut, where the names of two Africans, who had fallen in the fight, were put on the monument, but colonized off, and a line drawn between them and the whites, as he said, "in keeping with American injustice to its colored heroes."

I remember, with more than common pride, of making the first campaign speech in the Garfield and Arthur compaign, of any man in the United States, at Springfield, Illinois, June 26th, 1880. I went frequently to Lincoln's monument, so beautifully situated near that city. An incident occurred one day with a gentleman, also a visitor, who denounced the whole structure with great severity. Mr. Lincoln has one hand, as you know, extended, holding the Emancipation proclamation; while on each side of him is a flat block, unoccupied, two or three of the corners of the pedestal had groups of figures. I joined in with the gentleman, for rebuke, not for sympathy, and stated that in my judgment, to render perfect the whole, on one of the flat blocks should be placed a statue of the little negro girl found fast asleep early one morning on the steps of the capitol in Washington with the handcuffs still on her—she had escaped from a Washington slave pen during the previous night. On the other there should be placed a statue of Senator Bruce in the act of addressing the United States Senate; then the grouping would be complete; then the contrast between slavery and freedom would be visibly plain. Nor would Lincoln be disgraced; the effect of the Emancipation proclamation would be impressed upon every visitor.

I hold myself second to no man, living or dead, in my deep respect and admiration of Abraham Lincoln; but I do say, because, when I accepted your invitation to address you to-day, I made up my mind to tell you nothing but the truth, that Mr. Lincoln did not, as fully as some others—I mean other distinguished men of prominence—understand either the character or capacity of the negro race. In 1862 a delegation of colored people waited on him, urging him to issue the Emancipation proclamation, and in his remarks to them, he said:

"It may be necessary to free the slaves in order to save the Union. If it is, it will be done; but although the war may free you, you will neither enjoy freedom nor peace among your old masters. Your only hope will be in colonization. The education of the Southern people has been such that the master and slave will never be able to live together in peace and harmony, except as such. You must emigrate, you must colonize. It is your only hope, freedom, peace and happiness."

Equivalent to saying, that if we can save the Union, we will keep

you in slavery; if we can't save it you can have your freedom ; but the freedom of 4,000,000 of blacks is a secondary consideration. In his letter to Horace Greeley he virtually so states it. But I want to show you that Mr. Lincoln was not as far-seeing as he has been supposed to have been.

Now as to his prophecy. You who read the papers well know that the Northern country has been, and is now, agitated from almost one end to the other, with strikes ; that employers and employes have had a bitter conflict, quarelling all the time. In some places, extra police, even military, have been called out to protect the property of capitalists in others to shield those men who thought they had the right, in a free country, to work for what wages they thought fit, from other men, who were determined that they alone should dictate the wages at which any man of their occupation should be permitted to work. In the South there has not been a single strike, not one. Employers and employes have got along in harmony, and a development of industries, an increase in manufactures, has occurred marvellous to contemplate. At the Atlanta Exposition a wonderful manifestation of Southern enterprise was shown, for the first time in the history of the country I believe; the cotton was picked from the vines in the morning, and at night of the same day it had been spun into cloth, made into a suit of clothes, and worn by a visitor. This was largely accomplished by the labor of former slaves—showing, I think pretty plainly, notwithstanding Mr. Lincoln's assertion to the contrary, that "the former master and slave are living together in harmony."

Now I ask you to contrast the remarks of President Garfield in his Inaugural:

"The elevation of the negro race from slavery to the full rights of citizenship is the most important political change we have known since the adoption of the constitution of 1787. * * * It has added immensely to the moral and industrial forces of our own people. * * * It has surrendered to their own guardianship the manhood of more than 5,000,000 people, and has opened to each one of them a career of freedom and usefulness; it has given men inspiration to the power of self help in both races by making labor more honorable to one and more necessary to the other."

In attestation of that, as I have before said, look at the progress and prosperity and wonderful development of the South in manufactures and other industries by the free labor now "made honorable to the one and more white labor necessary to the other."

PROTECTION OF ALL AMERICAN LABOR.

A few words on labor, black as well as white. To enable any man to prosper and progress through his labor, in a country like this he needs protection. If you put him down on a level with the poorly-paid labor of other countries you degrade him. On this question of protected labor the next Presidential election will be determined. It is a purely political event we are commemorating. You cannot, nor ought you to try, to ignore politics on such an occasion. That only is an honest policy which at all times aims "to promote the general welfare" of all, black and white. That party will in the future, as it has in the past, secure the support of the people whose

aim, distinctively announced, is to benefit and protect labor of every color. He only who in the past has been the friend and protector of white labor, will be the friend of colored labor in the future.

Remember, that the upholders and defenders of slavery were the urgent advocates of free trade and the persistent opponents of protection of American labor. That issue virtually caused the recent rebellion.

I will detain you but a few moments longer. In the beginning of my address, I alluded to Mrs. Stowe. That good old quaker poet Whittier wrote a special poem for the celebration of that lady's seventieth birthday. Let me give you the concluding lines, singularly appropriate here, for I am confident there is no one present but will heartily accord to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe the highest meed of praise and admiration—though

She needs no guaranty of fame
Whose own is linked with Freedom's name.
Long ages after ours shall keep
Her memory living while we sleep;
The waves that wash our grey coast lines,
The winds that rock the southern pines,
Shall sing of her; the unending years
Shall tell her tale in unborn ears.
And when, with sins and follies past,
White, black and red shall own as one,
The noblest work by woman done.